



# Situated Listening: The Sound of Absorption in Classical Cinema

*Giorgio Biancorosso*

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Screenwriters and film directors have long been fascinated by the challenges of representing the listening experience on screen. While music has played a central role in film narrative since the conception of moving pictures, the representation of music listening has remained a special occurrence.

In *Situated Listening: The Sound of Absorption in Classical Cinema*, author Giorgio Biancorosso argues for a redefinition of the music listener as represented in film. Rather than construct the listener as a reverential concertgoer, music analyst, or gallery dweller, this book instead shows how films offer a new way of thinking about listening as distributed experience, an activity made public and shareable across vast cultural spaces rather than an insular motion. It shows how cinema functions as not only a reservoir of established modes of listening, but also an agent in the development of new listening practices. As Biancorosso argues, many films have perpetuated a long-existing paradox of music as a means of silencing. Consider an aggressive score overlaying battle scenes or a romantic scene conveying unspoken intimacy. In the place of conversational exchange exists a veil of sound in the form of music, and *Situated Listening* explains why this function influences both the course of interpretation and empathy experienced by film spectators. By focusing on cinematic, physical, and emotional scenery surrounding a character, viewers can recognize aspects of their own lives, developing a deeper empathy for each fictional character through real and shared listening practices.

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